*Message to all staff, sent on behalf of David Meates, Chief Executive*

**COVID-19 Level 4 – Revised Hospital and Clinic Visitor Policy**

In line with the Government’s directive that we are now working under the COVID-19 alert level 4 protocol, all Canterbury and West Coast DHB facilities have adopted a no-visitors policy, with only a few notable exceptions.

The exceptions include:

* a nominated person who is supporting a terminal patient through end of life care
* a parent/guardian who is supporting a child
* the chosen support person of a woman who is giving birth. Note though, no visitors will be allowed during the mother’s postnatal stay, as per the national direction.

The decision about whether exceptional circumstances apply is at the discretion of the Charge Nurse/Midwife Manager or another lead clinician.

In all exceptions where a visitor is allowed to access any DHB facility, appropriate screening will take place before they are allowed to enter the care environment to ensure they are well, have clean hands and are using appropriate PPE.

This measure, as with all current COVID-19-related measures, is to ensure the safety of patients and staff by minimising avoidable contact and the potential for spread.

We are going through an extraordinary situation where we must  examine our tikanga to enable us to care for those people who are in hospital in the best possible way.

To this end our new tikanga for visiting is designed to protect and care for those tūroro and tāngata whaiora who are in hospital. These tikanga are based on tiaki, manaaki and aroha.

I ask that all whānau help us to protect and care for all who are in our care in Canterbury and West Coast health services.

Ngā mihi ki a koutou

David Meates, MNZM

Chief Executive | Canterbury District Health Board and West Coast District Health Board

NB: One further note in terms of process regarding those ‘special circumstances’ visitors. The number of entrances to facilities has been restricted to as few as possible, and security are checking on who comes and goes (so it’s more important than ever that you carry your ID at all times). Visitors need to register when they first arrive, and will be screened to ensure they are well then asked to sign in each time they visit. Those exceptional patients as defined in David’s message above should have one nominated visitor only. The person that visits can’t be changed from one day to the next to minimise the number of contacts.

We are placing ads from today to let the public know of the change and will be reminding them through social media channels as well as responding to enquiries through social media.

Please forward to any contractors who work in your team